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tion of what Hegel said. Gans, the editor of the *Philosophy of History*, as it appears in the *Werke*, Dr. Lasson declares, endeavored to make Hegel's diction more elegant, and therefore unnecessarily filed down the spontaneous Hegelian style. Our editor has wisely refused to take such liberties: he has omitted nothing which he thought to be to the point.

It is interesting to note that Dr. Lasson regarded the war period as a most opportune time in which to republish this book. "It is beyond doubt," he says in the Preface of the volume published in 1917, "that the 'ideas of 1914' have their origin in Hegel's conception of history and theory of the state." And he goes on to say that "if in the present world-war an acute Germanization of the world takes place instead of the slow spread of the German spirit, if one world-power after the other, to save itself from downfall, must appropriate, and force upon its people, the German conception of the state and of the political duty of its citizens, we ought not to forget how much Hegel contributed to make this notion of the state the free and living possession of the German people, the notion which is now proving itself to be the highest and the truest in the terrible conflagration of the world." These words were penned while the war was in full swing and before the German débâcle; and one can understand them as an expression of the war spirit. One can agree that the spirit of unity and service that burned in the hearts of men during the conflict is a beautiful thing, and that the world would be transformed if it endured in times of peace. There is much that is valuable in the Hegelian conception of the state, but what is true in it is not Prussian, and what is Prussian in it is not the ideal of the forward looking nations of the earth. And Dr. Lasson still speaks in the Prussian strain, in a voice that does not seem to me to be the voice of the great German idealists; the German defeat has not taught him anything. At the end of his volume on *Hegel als Geschichtsphilosoph*, which bears the date of 1920, the pan-Germanistic spirit again reveals itself. He believes that the world-war has, as yet, not even run through its first phase. "Its end," he declares, "will not appear until the people that is called by Providence to give the principle of true political *Kultur* an abiding place in the humanity of all parts of the globe, has grown to such physical strength and spiritual maturity that the powers which today still consider themselves justified in subjugating the earth with their unworthy (*minderwertig*) principles, can no longer resist it." It is to be hoped that the German people will not again attempt to ram their political philosophy down the throat of an unwilling world, but will instead, apply what is good in it to the tasks of peace and show by their example that it is really worth while.

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Le problème du mal. Par ÉMILE LASBAX. Paris, Félix Alcan, 1919.—pp. viii, 451.

How is the undeniable actuality of evil to be explained so as to safeguard Omnipotent Goodness in the universe? To this perennial task of speculative theology M. Lasbax brings a firm determination to exploit science in the

interests of mysticism. In the volume before us the whole field of scientific inquiry is subjected to a vigorous critique. The questions are asked in a scientific manner but in a religious spirit: as the author himself reminds us, "one begins as a philosopher, but one finishes as a theologian" (p. 446).

The author's first judgment of value, variously expressed, is that life is a good; existence is better than non-existence; death is an evil. The problem of good and evil thus becomes for him a problem of life and death and so remains throughout the inquiry. Adopting the dualist formula of the *Encyclopédie*, he treats life and death as contraries. They exhibit strikingly an antagonism and a struggle which is universal. The disclosure of this duality and conflict throughout the universe is indeed a main cosmological undertaking of the book. The cosmic antagonism is exhibited in pathology. Whether we regard disease as the opposition of toxin and antitoxin or of microbe and phagocyte, it is a battleground of cell against cell, tissue against tissue, tendency against tendency, life against death. Physiology and psychology disclose the same duality: of germplasm and somatic plasm, of the sympathetic and the cerebrospinal system, of instinct and intelligence. Nucleus and protoplasm in the primitive cell, acidity and alkalinity in the organic process; factors making for the maintenance and recovery of the primitive homogeneity of life, and destructive factors of heterogeneity and individualization, involving the contraction of the scope of existence and ultimate death.

This destructive process and this antagonism of forces is exhibited also in inorganic nature. In the expansive homogeneous ether gradual solidification and cooling of matter set in, degradation of energy and diminution of existence: death again. The author is brought to the broad conclusion that the force of destruction and evil, in matter, is attraction. The death of matter he sees in its final individuation, in the atom.

In terms of space, this process of the impoverishment of existence may be conceived as a progressive loss of dimensions, with the dimensionless point as the goal, the death of existence. The enhancement of the forces of expansiveness in the universe, on the other hand, would lead to a space of infinite number of dimensions, boundless and free "power of supreme expansion, affirmation of immortality of being and of life" (p. 304). The duration of a being, in turn, represents the intensity of power of expansion and resistance against the attraction of evil. So we may—distinguish the *durée-limite*, the instant, corresponding to the atom,—from—the *durée sans bornes*, immortality—corresponding to the infinite expansive universe (p. 321).

Evolution is to be viewed as a process of purification, a vast struggle to recover the primeval perfection. This struggle necessarily involves pain and grief. The highest synthesis and the saving unity of existence cannot be grasped or attained by the intellect. They transcend intelligence. Life eternally good, immortality, becomes possible for us as we diminish individuality little by little through a constant effort at life-expansion: through the overcoming of the subject-object dualism, of egoism, of evil and hate, through the progressive attainment of infinite love. In this state of joy and

bliss the limitations of time and space are transcended, and we entertain the vision of that *instant immense* which we call eternity (p. 436).

Has M. Lasbax met his own demands? Does his theory recognize the reality of evil in the world, and likewise the omnipotence and the all-goodness of the Divine Essence? He insists that it does, and at the close of his book attempts to distinguish his position from the Manichean and from that of the Avesta. Of the two antagonistic principles, good alone is real, an integral expression of life; evil is only negative, eternal hate and death, ever at war with love and life. But, in spite of the impoverishment of existence and its apparent loss of immortality which this struggle has already wrought, the energies of life and love are not to be set at naught. So life is being liberated from the fatal evil attraction, is being purified of evil: the philosophy of nature is to find its completion in the philosophy of liberty (p. 451).

This forward look of hope somehow persuades the author that evil is to be only an episode in the story of existence. But is a story that admits the introduction of such episodes an entirely good story? The origin of evil in the universe is explained by M. Lasbax in terms of a somewhat fantastic cosmogony. In his contemplation of the initial paradisiacal state of perfect homogeneity, as well as in his vision of the millennial dawn, he lapses into the rhapsodic strain, which makes close pursuit of his train of ideas very difficult. But it seems fairly clear that he refers death and evil in the universe to the process of individuation. The overcoming of the fatal attraction would presumably involve the effacement of individuality and a return to the primeval homogeneous goodness. Evil and hate apparently involve individuality, but good and love do not. Had the author cut his encyclopedic survey of the sciences somewhat shorter and inquired soberly into the relation of value, and especially of good-evil, to personality, we might perhaps have been spared this view of the perfectly good undifferentiated universe. The religious worth of this cosmic analysis and prospect it is not necessary to discuss here. But to refer death and evil to individuation, and the good of life to undifferentiated homogeneity, is to outdo Leibniz and his reduction of moral to metaphysical evil. It is, in terms of ethical theory, a procedure either meaningless or suicidal.

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La Pensée de Milton. Par DENIS SAURAT. Paris, Félix Alcan, 1920.—pp. 365.

Through this work Dr. Saurat, professor of English at the Lycée of Bordeaux, takes his place among the French scholars who have written appreciatively of English literature, and shows himself one of the growing number of expositors of Milton who believe that the poet was more than a Puritan sectary, and more than a mere literary man. In passages which have been conventionally commented on as obsolete seventeenth-century theology, M. Saurat finds the